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Diamond Peak Wilderness

History

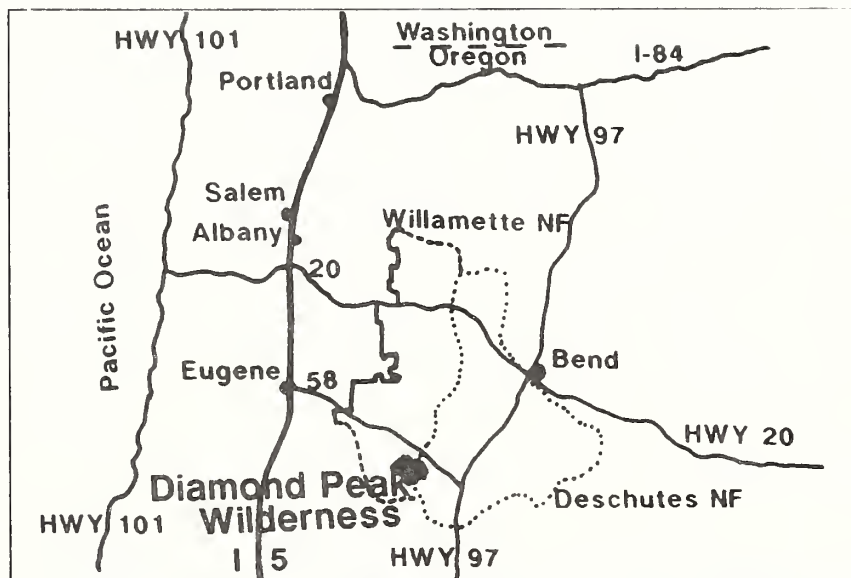
On February 5, 1957, the USDA Forest Service set aside a 36,637 acre area of land encompassing the Cascade Mountain Range south of Eugene and Bend, Oregon, and established it as the Diamond Peak Wilderness. Seven years later, Congress included the Diamond Peak Wilderness in the National Wilderness Preservation System. The Oregon Wilderness Act of 1984 enlarged the area to 52,337 acres, its present size.

Long before the Forest Service and legislators took action to preserve the primitive environment of the Diamond Peak Wilderness, Native American tribes roamed the area. Early pioneers with their wagons and horses found the Diamond Peak area a challenge to cross on their journeys to the Willamette Valley. Best known of these early settlers are the members of the "Lost Wagon Train," who passed south of Diamond Peak in October, 1853, struggling to reach the west side of the Cascades before winter storms hit them.

Unlike the pioneers of 1853, who viewed Diamond Peak and the surrounding area as a barrier, people today come to this wilderness to enjoy the rugged beauty and the outdoor recreation opportunities it offers hikers, horse-back riders, and mountain climbers.

Trails

The Diamond Peak Wilderness contains 125 miles of trails.



The Diamond Peak Wilderness is located approximately 65 miles southwest of Bend, Oregon, and 65 miles southeast of Eugene, Oregon. (Map created by Ronnie Yimsut)

Because this wilderness borders both the Deschutes and Willamette National Forests, key access points are located on both sides of the Cascade Range. You can find all the trails clearly marked on the Diamond Peak Wilderness map.

Some of the trails beginning in the Deschutes National Forest include:

- Yoran Lake Trail from the W end of Odell Lake
 - Diamond View Lake Trail from the W end of Odell Lake
 - Fawn and Saddle Lakes Trail from the E end of Odell Lake
 - Diamond View Lake Trail from the E end of Crescent Lake
- Trails beginning in the Willamette National Forest include:
- Ruth Lake Trail from Road 380
 - Blue Lake Trail from Road 2149
 - Vivian Lake Trail from Hwy 58

Rockpile Lake Trail from Road 2160

PCNST

Approximately 14 miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail wind through the Diamond Peak Wilderness. For hikers who want to enjoy the wilderness but prefer a well-marked and regularly maintained trail, the PCNST is a good choice.

Diamond Peak

Formed while the entire Cascade Range was experiencing volcanic activity, this dormant volcano stands 8,744 feet high. Glaciers from the Ice Age carved the peak, giving it its present rugged appearance.

Today, mountain climbers enjoy scaling Diamond Peak. The most popular approach is from the south ridge.



PREPARED BY
Deschutes National Forest
Willamette National Forest
Pacific Northwest Region
USDA Forest Service

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Wilderness Handout
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Lakes and Fishing

When the glaciers that carved Diamond Peak receded, they left many depressions that later filled with water to form most of the wilderness's lakes. Many of these lakes are now stocked with brook or rainbow trout. A State of Oregon fishing license is required for fishing in the area.

Wildlife

Elk, black-tailed deer, and mule deer roam the Diamond Peak Wilderness during the summer months. Other natural inhabitants of this area include small mammals (such as marmots, snowshoe hares, and squirrels) and a variety of birds (including the Clark's nutcracker, gray jay, and water ouzel).

Forests and Wildflowers

Mixed stands of various pine and fir trees as well as hemlock cover the entire wilderness. When collecting wood for campfires, please pick only the fallen branches and trees on the ground.

In meadows and along lake-shores and streams, you will also see several types of alpine flowers, including penstemon, lupine, and Indian paintbrush. Please leave flowers as they are. Cutting live plants can cause serious harm to the primitive environment of the wilderness.

When To Go and Weather

Because of heavy snowfall in the winter and spring months, trails in the wilderness can be blocked by snow banks throughout June and early July. The hiking season usually extends from July 1 to October 1.

Weather can change rapidly so pack several layers of clothing. Be prepared for rain and cool

temperatures, especially at night. During mosquito season, you may also want to carry along some mosquito repellent.

Wilderness Etiquette

To maintain the primitive environment of the Diamond Peak Wilderness, the Forest Service asks that you follow the guidelines listed in the brochure, "Without a Trace," available from any USDA Forest Service office. These guidelines are also explained on the back of the Diamond Peak Wilderness map.

A few of the no-trace camping guidelines are: camp at least 200 feet away from water sources, avoid shortcutting switchbacks on the trails, burn your trash, and pack out all non-burnable garbage. By leaving no trace of your journey through the wilderness, future generations will be able to experience the challenges and enjoy the beauty of this primitive environment.

At this time, neither a permit nor registration is required to enter the Diamond Peak Wilderness. However, the Forest Service is continually monitoring wilderness use and impacts and may implement a permit system in the future.

The Forest Service encour-

ages you to leave an itinerary of your wilderness journey with a relative or friend at home. This information becomes invaluable to rescue teams if an emergency occurs.

Maps and Additional Info

Maps of the Diamond Peak Wilderness are available for \$2.00 at Forest Service offices throughout the Deschutes and Willamette National Forests. The maps show the trails, lakes, and various elevations in the wilderness, as well as roads leading to trail-heads into the wilderness.

You can obtain additional information on current weather conditions and fire restrictions by contacting the Crescent Ranger District office on the Deschutes National Forest, or the Rigdon Ranger District office on the Willamette National Forest. Addresses and telephone numbers are:

Crescent Ranger District
P.O. Box 208
Crescent, OR 97733
(503) 433-2234

Rigdon Ranger District
48455 Highway 58
Oakridge, OR 97463
(503) 782-2283



Trails in this wilderness lead to spectacular views of Diamond Peak, a favorite of mountain climbers and photographers alike. (Photo by Roger and Donna Aitkenhead)

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